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Date: December 11, 2020

To: Maryland Hospital SAFE Programs and Billing Departments

From: The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services - Sexual Assault
Reimbursement Unit (SARU)

Re: Non-occupational Post-exposure Prophylaxis (nPEP) Pilot Program Guidance for Victims
of Sexual Assault

Greetings,

This document is to provide guidance as it pertains to the protocols for administration and billing for the medical care, medication, and follow-up care for sexual assault victims who meet the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) criteria](#) and the [National Clinicians Consultation Centers criteria](#) for the administration of the nPEP Pilot Program to assist in the prevention of contracting HIV.

Eligibility: Any victim of sexual assault who meets the CDC guidelines for nPEP is eligible to receive the medications free of charge. Patients are **not** required to have a SAFE exam, but the proper nPEP billing form must be submitted. Forensic Nurse Examiners and healthcare providers seeking information or assistance prescribing nPEP can contact the National Clinician Consultation Center Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline at 1-888-448-4911. Hotline hours are Monday – Friday from 9 am - 8 pm EST and from 11 am – 8 pm EST on weekends and holidays.

Important to Know: There are additional steps in the reimbursement process for the nPEP Pilot Program that differ from the standard reimbursement process for a SAFE exam. Please read the following Pilot Program protocol carefully.

Protocol:

1. Protocol if a full course of therapy is available at your facility:

If the patient is treated at a hospital, doctor's office, clinic, or other medical facility that stocks a full course of nPEP therapy that can be provided to the patient at the time of discharge, the medication should be dispensed to the patient and a reimbursement claim for the full course of the medication can be submitted to the Sexual Assault Reimbursement Unit (SARU) using the nPEP/HIV Prophylaxis Treatment Reimbursement Claim & Prescription Form. These claims are submitted to the SARU in the same manner as claims for sexual assault evidence collection and the related medical care.

2. Protocol if your facility is unable to supply a full course of nPEP therapy:

If your facility is unable to provide a full course of therapy to the patient at the time of discharge, there are options to assist the patient in obtaining this medication. The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services is collaborating with Terrapin Pharmacy to facilitate the process for sexual assault patients to receive this critical medication. Upon discharge, facilities should provide the patient with at least a 3 - 7 day dose of nPEP medication, and then Terrapin Pharmacy will provide the remaining medication to the patient by mail order or courier delivery so that the patient is supplied a full course of therapy without interruption. The process must work as follows:

1. Complete the nPEP/HIV Prophylaxis Treatment Reimbursement Claim & Prescription Form in its entirety and send it to Terrapin Pharmacy by email to meds@terpsrx.com or by fax to 877-829-1925.
2. Be sure to indicate the number of days of medication supplied to the patient while at your facility so that Terrapin Pharmacy knows how many remaining days of medication to provide the patient.
3. Be sure to verify the patient address for delivery of the medication, and a valid phone number in the event of any issues.
4. Provide the patient with the Terrapin nPEP contact sheet in case of any issues or questions.

Terrapin Pharmacy
410-919-0103 (Office)
877-829-1925 (Fax)
meds@terpsrx.com

3. Protocol for nPEP related follow-up care:

Facilities providing follow-up care to victims of sexual assault for nPEP related testing and screening should use the nPEP/HIV Prophylaxis Treatment Reimbursement Claim & Prescription Form and check “follow-up care” and submit the form for reimbursement to the SARU. Reimbursement for follow-up care by the SARU is allowed within 180 days from the date of exposure.

FAQs:

1. How do I submit an nPEP claim to the SARU for reimbursement?

A. Claims should be submitted to the SARU at:

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services
Sexual Assault Reimbursement Unit (SARU)
100 Community Place
Crownsville, Maryland 20132

You must include the nPEP/HIV Prophylaxis Treatment Reimbursement Claim & Prescription Form, payment sheet, and an itemized charge sheet.

If you have never submitted for reimbursement to the SARU, please submit a W-9, including a payment address if different from address on W-9, and all required claim information stated above to the SARU.

2. What if I forget to have the patient sign the nPEP form?

A: It is critical that the patient sign the form.

As a very rare exception, the SARU will accept a SAFE nurse's signature along with that of a witness. It is critical that the proper protocol is followed and a patient signature is obtained as a general practice.

3. Are electronic physician signatures allowed?

A: Yes.

4. What if Terrapin Pharmacy is being utilized for medication fulfillment and I forget to send the form to Terrapin?

A: Email or fax the form immediately and call Terrapin to notify them. The patient should also be contacted so that everyone can work together to ensure that the patient receives the medication immediately.

5. What if the patient cannot receive, or is afraid to receive the medication by mail or courier?

A: If a patient cannot or refuses to receive medication by mail or by courier, the patient can be provided with a prescription to take to fill at a retail pharmacy. Retail pharmacies would provide patients with a supply of the medication as indicated on the prescription from the clinician, which would leave patients with excess medication. We ask that the use of retail pharmacies be an absolute last resort to eliminate waste so that we can provide coverage for as many victims as possible. Please explore the following options with the patient before resorting to the use of a retail pharmacy:

1. Using a friend or family member's address for delivery.
2. Using a local rape crisis center for medication delivery.

6. Can a patient utilize their own insurance for the medication?

A: Yes. Patients can choose to utilize their insurance for the medication if they would like to. SAFE nurses should provide this information to patients, but emphasize that they do not have to utilize their own insurance and that the SARU can be billed. If a patient chooses to utilize their own insurance for nPEP therapy, the patient can be provided with a prescription to take to the retail pharmacy of their choosing if the hospital is unable to provide the full course of therapy. Terrapin Pharmacy is also able to fill prescriptions using a patient's insurance.

7. Can a patient use a manufacturer's Patient Assistance Program?

A: Yes. Based on eligibility, the patient may qualify to participate in a program where he or she could receive the medication at no cost. Links to the patient assistance programs for the major manufacturers are below.

- For Truvada: (Tenofovir + Emtricitabine)
Gilead (800) 226-2056
www.gileadadvancingaccess.com
- For Isentress: (Raltegravir)
Merck (800) 850-3430
www.merckhelps.com
- For Tivicay: (Dolutegravir)
ViiV Healthcare: (877) 784-4842
www.viivhealthcareforyou.com
- Common PAP Application (HIV):
https://targethiv.org/sites/default/files/supporting-files/Common_PAP_form_fillable_2019.pdf

8. Can a patient receive nPEP medication without obtaining a SAFE exam?

A: Yes. The facility will determine if the patient qualifies for nPEP therapy, regardless of the patient obtaining a SAFE exam.

9. What is covered under follow-up care?

A: Follow-up care for nPEP-related care is covered up to 180 days from the date of exposure. If a patient should require additional services, or if they contract HIV after completing the 28-day nPEP medication, the patient should contact a local health department, federally qualified health center or an HIV clinic. Some local health departments offer regional navigator programs that offer education on PrEP, screen for eligibility for the medication, screen for insurance coverage and assist patients with obtaining insurance coverage. A list of providers in Maryland that provide PEP can be found at <https://www.prepmaryland.org/find-a-provider/>. A list of all local Maryland health departments can be found at <https://health.maryland.gov/Pages/departments.ASPX>.

At the time of receiving an HIV-positive diagnosis, the patient should seek wrap-around services and case management services from a local health department or HIV clinic. The SARU is designed to reimburse for evidence collection, and not comprehensive medical care.

10. Where can patients find out more information on nPEP therapy and resources for nPEP or advocacy services?

A: Patients can utilize the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault's Patient Guide to nPEP at:

https://mcasa.org/assets/files/patient_npep_info_guide_updated_Nov_2020.pdf.

11. What if the patient has questions or concerns about the medication?

A. If the individual has questions concerning the medications they should contact the entity that provided the medication. If the medication was received from Terrapin Pharmacy, he or she can contact Terrapin Pharmacy by email at meds@terpsrx.com or leave a detailed voicemail at (410) 919-0103. A pharmacy team member will return the call as soon as possible. If the individual believes that they are having a severe or life-threatening reaction (allergic, shortness of breath) call 911.

12. What if a healthcare provider or forensic nurse examiner has questions about HIV risk and prescribing nPEP?

A: Providers seeking information or assistance prescribing nPEP can contact the National Clinician Consultation Center (NCCC) Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline at 1-888-448-4911. Hotline hours are Monday – Friday from 9 am – 8 pm EST and from 11 am – 8 pm on weekends and holidays. The NCCC references [these resources](#) for clinicians needing to make decisions outside of their hours of operation. A toolkit is also available at:

<https://aidsetc.org/resource/non-occupational-post-exposure-prophylaxis-npep-toolkit>

13. If a provider prescribed nPEP based on their discretion, is reimbursement provided in accordance with updated guidelines?

A: Based on national best practices and/or patient's level of risk, clinicians can provide justification for prescribing the medication.

14. How is the Pilot Program being evaluated?

A. The Pilot Program will be evaluated quarterly by all core stakeholders to ensure it is meeting the needs of victims in the most efficient and effective manner. If providers would like to be involved in this evaluation process, please provide your email address to the SARU at saru.claims@maryland.gov.

15. Can providers submit claims via courier?

A. Please do not submit claims via courier as staff are primarily teleworking during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 pandemic.

16. How can I contact the SARU if I have any billing questions?

A. For questions, please contact the SARU at saru.claims@maryland.gov.